

Numata at least fails to specifically teach a counting unit and a comparison unit, as recited in these independent claims. In particular, Numata merely discloses an up-counter 201 that counts up a pixel clock and a register 202 that has a printing dot position correcting value for the printing dot position which is set by a CPU 206 (see Numata, col. 18, lines 26-34). Additionally, Numata teaches that the comparator 203 compares a counted value in the up-counter 201 and the correcting value of the printing dot position correcting value set in the register 202 (see Numata, col. 18, lines 26-34). That is, neither the counts of the pixel clock, nor the printing dot position correcting value can reasonably be considered to correspond to a number of ejected ink droplets.

Moreover, Numata teaches that the image recording apparatus is configured to reduce the number of ink ejecting openings such that the mutual relationship of the recordings at each step may be adjusted (see Numata, column 18, lines 4-9). Further, the value associated with a measured area of the image data (i.e., "effective area"), as described by Numata, cannot be effective for determining a number of ejected ink droplets, because the area would not account for any ink droplets that may overlap upon ejection. Rather, the area is merely indicative of whether the positioning of the printing dot positions are correct, as suggested by the comparison described in Numata col. 18, lines 26-34. That is, Numata cannot reasonably be considered to teach or suggest a counting unit that counts ink droplets, as recited in the present independent claims. Additionally, both Katayama and Kamei fail to cure the deficiencies of Numata.

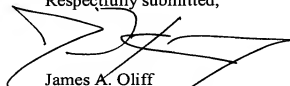
Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, in the September 25, 2007 Request for Reconsideration, and during the October 11, 2007 personal interview, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of the independent claims be withdrawn. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of the dependent claims 2-23, 26, 28, 29, 31 and 33-35 be withdrawn, at least in view of the patentability of independent claims

1, 25, 27 and 32, from which these claims variously depend, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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